

Monday, April 9, 2007

Attn: Melissa Miller-Henson  
Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
c/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Melissa,

My name is Francesca Koe and I am writing to nominate myself for the North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. I am very eager to serve on such a collaborative project and believe that my hands on coastal experience, extensive local knowledge and pragmatic perspective will prove to be very useful in MLPA's endeavors. I have been an avid diver, Master Scuba Instructor and Bay Area resident for over 11 years. Every week I take great pride in diving, mapping, exploring and teaching others about our coastal waters, marine mammals and aquatic ecosystems.

Even before my own first open-water training dives at Salt Point Park, Gerstle Cove I have had great respect and admiration for the marine life community we are so fortunate to be a part of. Since that time, I have immersed myself, literally, in the local dive community, recreational dive businesses and in raising public awareness about our watershed and the impact of our significant human pressure on the ocean. I am one of only a handful of PADI ([www.padi.com](http://www.padi.com)) instructors who are certified to teach Kelp Diving, a course that teaches people about the beautiful and prolific forests that inhabit our regional waters and how they contribute to the diverse eco-system that they are an integral player in.

I have lead many classes with California Dive Center [www.cadive.com](http://www.cadive.com) in San Mateo, and am also now teaching at Diver Dan's [www.diverdans.com](http://www.diverdans.com) in the south bay; I have recently added Harbor Dive Center in Sausalito [www.harbordive.com](http://www.harbordive.com), to the list of dive stores I work with. I am the Senior Crew and lead trainer for rescue divers & dive masters on the MontereyExpress, a dive charter operator at K Dock in Monterey [www.montereyexpress.com](http://www.montereyexpress.com).

Also, extremely relevant to this MLPA project is the work that I do in the Gulf of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary <http://farallones.noaa.gov/> where I serve as part of a collective team of instructors, naturalists and crew aboard the Mt. Tamalpais, taking passengers to the Farallones Islands to learn about their history and witness, (among other birds and marine mammals, the great white sharks who visit us seasonally during the late fall months. When I am not actually in the water or teaching, I spend some of my free time as the Scuba Editor for an online free diving and scuba diving magazine called DeeperBlue [www.deeperblue.net](http://www.deeperblue.net) where I managing editorial content and write articles on training, safety, travel and environment. And last but not least, my day job at Underground Ads [www.undergroundads.com](http://www.undergroundads.com), provides me with a tremendous breadth of experience in working with, on and for coalitions composed of public, private and non-profit committees. As the managing director for UA, I am tasked with problem solving and facilitation on a daily basis, and it is my job to create well-rounded plans for often complex messages and communications to wildly varying target audiences.

I love the work that I do and would be thrilled to contribute my energy and experience to the Regional Stakeholder Group. I am confident in my ability to help the process succeed and to fairly represent & consider all points of view. In particular, I bring to the MLPA table the much needed voice of those who spend time actually recreating in the waters between Half Moon Bay and Point Arena, and have a unique per view of what makes marine protected areas so special and so important, while also understanding that as humans and businesses we must and do interact with these locations and need to have clear roles and rules to do so properly. I am willing and able to provide the time commitment needed to participate, and have a myriad array of dedicated constituencies that I can and will communicate with including my students, local dive clubs, retailers, and other supporters of the ocean. Please feel free to contact me with any additionally questions you may have – I look forward to continuing the dialogue and ultimately contributing to the process.

Kind regards,

Francesca Koe  
San Francisco, CA